

LETTER

TO THE

Rev. Mr. **POTTER.**

In Answer to his **SERMON**,
 preach'd at *Reymerston* in **NOR-**
FOLK, against the People call'd
METHODISTS.

By **CORNELIUS GAYLEY, Junior.**

*My Heart was hot within me, while I was
 musing the Fire burned: Then spake I with my
 Tongue. The natural Man receiveth not the Things
 of the Spirit of God: For they are foolishness unto
 him; neither can he know them because they are
 spiritually discerned. Psalm, 39, 3. 1 Cor. 2, 14.*

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*IN the Memoirs of * Mr. Haliburton's Life*
(Prefac'd and Recommended very much by
Dr. Watt's) we have an Account of his last sick-
ness and of his speaking on his Death Bed to some
Persons round him, in the following Manner. " O
" Sirs, I dread mightily, that a rational sort of
" Religion is coming in among us; I mean by it,
" a Religion that consists in a bare Attendance
" on outward Duties and Ordinances, with-
" out the Power of Godliness; and thence Peo-
" ple shall fall into a Way of serving God,
" which is meer Deism, having no relation to
" Christ Jesus and the Spirit of God." Vide
Page 119. These Words of his (which were spoke
when there could be no inducement to dissemble)
declare the very sentiments of my own Heart:
And as such, they may serve to shew my true Mo-
tives for the following Publication. And if it
may prove in any Degree contributory to the Glory
of God, and promote the Life and Power of true
Godliness, amongst any Denomination of Christians,
it will fully answer the design of One who is a
sincere Well-wisher to all Mankind.

Norwich,



** Mr. Haliburton was a Learned Professor of Divinity,*
in the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, and was emi-
nent for true Religion, and Piety. He died rejoicing in
the Lord, in the Year, 1712.

SIR,

THOUGH I am not personally known to you, yet having lately perused a Sermon of yours, on the pretended Inspiration of the Methodists; I take the Liberty the Press affords, of communicating to you some of my Thoughts in Print, upon this Occasion. And I pray God what I have to say, may be to His Glory, for the Illustration of Truth, and to the Edification and building up of Souls, in that most *Holy Faith*, which is *the substance of Things hoped for, and the Evidence of Things not seen*, Heb. 11, 1.

Before I enter upon the Subject, I would observe, that it is not from an Attachment to any particular Sect, or Party of People, that I am prompted to answer you in this Publick Manner; but purely from the Love of Truth. I am no Lover of Controversy, yet I cannot bear to see the sacred Mysteries of the Christian Religion, become the Scoff, and Derision, of every unguarded Tongue, or Pen, without shewing my Disrelish of such Proceedings.

Therefore Sir, not out of any Disrespect to you, (whose Happiness I sincerely desire) but from a Christian Zeal to defend the Truths of the Gospel, I must beg Leave to animadvert upon several Propositions in your Sermon; and hope to make it appear to every impartial un-

prejudiced Reader, (who will coolly weigh all Things) that your Discourse is as barren of sound Divinity as it is of that Decency, Candour, and good Manners, which distinguishes so much the Pious Christian, and the real Gentleman, from every tinsel Counterfeit to these Characters.

I dont doubt Sir, but that to many of your Readers it is a sufficient Recommendation to your Sermon, that it lashes so keenly the People called Methodists; and the Intimation of this in your Title Page, I believe will promote its Sale: And numbers of People will make no scruple to say, it must be an excellent Thing, even before they see it. I congratulate you Sir, that you have the strong prejudices, and Prepossessions, of the unthinking World against the Methodists, to give a sanction to your Sermon; and in Consequence of this, they will eagerly read it, and their Approbation will all the way outstrip their Reading, and at last conclude that your Sermon is a Master-Piece, yourself a very judicious Person, and the Methodists a Company of Fools and Madmen, that hardly deserve to live. But on the other Hand Sir, let me inform you, that there are a number of People in the World, of sound Judgments, and unprejudiced Minds, who will impartially examine into Matters, and judge for themselves, and are not to be biassed by empty Clamour, and popular Prejudice; but who penetrate beyond the surface

face of Things, and who are willing to embrace the Pearl of Truth, wherever it appears. These are the Persons for whose Sake I chiefly write; and many of this Character, are to be found in all Christian Denominations, and whose esteem is more to me, than a Thousand Applauses from those, who only square their Thoughts and Lives by CUSTOM and TRADITION, the two great Idols of the major Part of Mankind; and whose Approbation, or Disapprobation, is not worth a Moments Concern: And is to me a Matter of as much indifference, as Esop's Gnat on the Bull's Horn.

Thus Sir, having made a little Introduction, I shall now proceed to examine, very coolly and impartially, the chief Propositions contain'd in your Sermon. And I pray God that all Persons who shall peruse the following Arguments, may do it without Prejudice or Partiality; with no other Views than to discover Truth, in her own native Beauty; that they may cleave unto it, with full purpose of Heart, and hold fast that which is good: Ever remembering, that on this, depends the true Felicity of the Soul, as well in this present World, as also in THAT which is to come.

Now Sir, the first Thing I shall take Notice of in your Sermon, is contained in its 12th and 13th Pages. Wherein you assert, that the being born of Water, and the Washing of Regeneration, is to be understood of the outward corporal Baptism of Water; and this [you

say is the first Part of the New Birth. Now in all my Reading of the sacred Bible, I never could find such a Doctrine.

But before I proceed to discuss this Point, let me inform You Sir, that it is not my Design here, to enter into any controversy, touching the Institution of outward Baptism, either as to the Thing itself, [Pro or Con] or as to its Time, Mode, or Form, whether relating to Infants, or adult Persons. My Business at Present is to shew, that outward Baptism, whensoever, or howsoever, it may be administered, constitutes no part of what is meant, by being *born of Water, and of the Spirit*; and this is what I shall now endeavour to demonstrate, for the sake of rescuing the *Power of Godliness*, from the Captivity of the Form, wherein, it has been long obscur'd.

The being *born of Water, and of the Spirit*, is one, and the same Thing.---And can no more be separated, than Light, and Heat, [can be] from Fire. For the Man that is born of Water, is also born of the Spirit: and He that is born of the Spirit, is also born of Water. The Phrase is an Allusion, to the sanctifying, cleansing, and purifying Influences, of the holy Spirit; which is continually in Scripture, compar'd to Water; both in the Old and New Testament. And as Water is particularly used, for cleansing, washing, and purifying; it is a very proper figure, to illustrate the Operations of the holy Spirit, upon

upon the Soul of Man: And that this figure is so used, in the usual Language of the inspired Writers, incontestably appears by the following Passages, which I pray you Sir seriously to consider

In the 36 of Ezekiel 25 Verse. The Lord by the Prophet, makes a gracious promise of the Spirit, in these Words, *Then will I sprinkle clean Water upon you, and ye shall be clean: From all your Idols I will cleanse you.* Now these Words, under the similitude of clean Water, do very beautifully point to *the Spirit, the holy Ghost*, which indeed cleanses the Soul from its Idols, and the filth of Sin. It was the being born of this sort of Water, that Christ had in view; when he spake to Nicodemus. This is *the washing of Regeneration*, and *the New Birth*; without which, no Man can see the Kingdom of God: But with which, the Thief upon the Cross, enter'd into Paradise, though a stranger to outward Baptism. That the Spirit is the Water that Christ spake of to Nicodemus, will still be more confirm'd, by the following Texts in the New Testament, John, 4, 10, where Christ says to the Samaritan Woman, *if thou didst know who it is that saith to thee give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of Him and He would have given thee living Water:* and Verse 13, 14. *Jesus said unto her, whosoever drinks of this Water [meaning the Water in the Well which the Woman came to draw] shall thirst again; but whosoever shall*

shall drink of the Water that I shall give Him shall never thirst, but the Water that I shall give him, shall be in him a Well of Water, springing up unto everlasting Life, and John, 7, 37, 38. Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any Man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, he that believeth on me as the Scripture hath said, out of his Belly shall flow Rivers of living Water; but this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive.

Now Sir, what Mathematical Demonstration can be more clear, than that all these Scriptures speak of the Spirit, and not of material Water? And as this is the Case, it is evident that Christ spake only of the Water of the Spirit to Nicodemus; and to be born of this Water, is to be born of God.

Again, to assert that outward Baptism is the New Birth, is the same Thing as to say, that the Substance is made perfect by its Shadow; Or that the Antitipe, is perfected by its Type, &c. But this Reasoning is so palpably absurd, that it is needless to use any Arguments to prove it so. And therefore I pass on to another Consideration.

It is still more evident, that outward Baptism can be no part of the new Birth, for this reason; that if it was so, than no Man can be saved, that is not baptized with outward Water, because Christ said, *except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.* Now if this Water is meant
of

of material Water, than I affirm, no Man can be saved without Water Baptism, because the Lord's Words are so express. But if this Water is meant of the Spirit, than I can enjoy the Satisfaction, that Millions of Souls have been made compleat partakers o' the New Birth, that were never outwardly baptiz'd. And indeed Sir, if you will insist that Christ spake of elemental Water, than you do in effect say, that all are damn'd, that are not born of Water by outward Baptism. For in order to give Entrance into the Kingdom of God, a Man must have both the first, and second, and every part of the new Birth. and if outward Baptism constitutes any part of the new Birth, (as you say it does) than how you will avoid sentencing all to Hell that are not baptized, I cannot conceive. But if this being born of Water, relates only to the Spirit, then all these difficulties subside, and we are taught to look to the Substance, and not to deceive ourselves by mistaking the Sign, for any part of the real new Birth: To which unhappy (yes very unhappy) mistake, is owing that universal scorn, and contempt, which so many at this Day, pour upon one of the most fundamental Truths of the Gospel. Amongst which number, I am sorry to find Sir, (that you have given a Publick Testimony,) that you are included.

I hope by this Time I have made it evident, that the Water Christ spake of to Nicodemus, is that Water which *is from above*. And the many sayings where Christ calls his Spirit by
this

his name, abundantly confirms it, and such of his sayings as I have already quoted, I think are so very Demonstrative, that it is hardly necessary to add any more Arguments about it. But however, that the matter [if possible] may be put out of all dispute, I shall further add;

That the being born of Water and of the Spirit cannot in any wise relate to outward corporeal Water for the following Reasons. John the Baptist told the People that he baptized them with Water, but one [which was Christ] should come after him who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost, and with Fire. Now Sir if being born of Water is to be understood of material Water, then the being baptiz'd with Fire must be also understood of material Fire, but who sees not [except he be quite blind] that these similitudes of Fire and Water are only meant to illustrate the holy Spirit and its Influences on the Soul. Therefore Sir as it is not a Being sprinkled with [or dipt into] material Fire that constitutes any part of the Baptism of the holy Ghost; So neither is it a Being sprinkled with [or dipt into] material Water that constitutes any part of the spiritual New Birth. For there is as much reason to understand it literally in one Case as in the other. But as a Man may give his Body to be burned with Fire, and yet be a stranger to that charity which is the Consequence of Regeneration; so I say that a Person may
be

be outwardly baptized a thousand Times with Water, and yet be a total stranger to any part of that new spiritual Birth, which is meant in the Phrase of being born of Water and of the Spirit.

Again, the Apostle Paul declareth that as many as have been baptiz'd into Christ have put on Christ. Now if this was meant of the outward Baptism of Water, than there are but few Persons in Christendom but what have put on Christ. But alas! the contrary needs no other Evidence, then that Torrent of Iniquity which runs like Water in our Streets. It is true, by outward Baptism a Person may put on the name of a Christian; But none except those who are baptized with the Holy Ghost have put on the Nature of a Christian. And indeed without this latter Baptism there is no Person can ever see the Kingdom of God in whatever Way or Manner he may have been outwardly baptized.

Now Sir, it is from a taking the Shadow for the Substance, the Sign for the Reality, that you and many others neglect the spiritual Baptism of the Holy Ghost; and in Consequence of this when any true Ministers of Jesus Christ preach the necessity of Conversion and Regeneration, then you are ready to cry out that they are setters forth of strange Doctrines, strange indeed Sir I fear to you, and Multitudes of nominal Christians, who shelter themselves under a bare Profession of Christ, having a Form of Godliness

Godliness but Enemies to the Power thereof. But notwithstanding that the Things of the Spirit are foolishness unto the natural Man, yet still Wisdom always was [and always will be] justified of all her Children.

Thus I have given you some of my Thoughts concerning the New Birth, and hope that I have made it plain that the being born of Water no more relates to material Water, than the being baptized with Fire relates to material Fire. Many more arguments I could bring on this Subject, but think that what I have already offer'd makes it needless; and therefore I will add no more on this Head than to exhort you Sir [as one that wishes you well] to examine seriously, whether you are not as yet, notwithstanding your outward Baptism] a stranger to any part of that New Birth, or spiritual Regeneration, which purifies the Heart, and makes it the Temple of the Holy Ghost; without which, no Man can see the Kingdom of God.

After this Sir, you go on to inform us in several Pages, of the extraordinary visible Miracles which were wrought, [by Signs and Wonders] in the infant State of the Church; which when more settled, were withdrawn: Such as the visible Descent of the Holy Ghost at Christ's Baptism in the form of a Dove, as also the like visible Descent of the Spirit, in the shape of fiery cloven Tongues, on the Day of Pentecost, &c.

Now

Now Sir, who denies that these sort of Miracles are ceased? And who pretends to lay claim to them? Yes, [says you] the Methodists do. I shall transcribe your Words. “ But
 “ tho’ these extraordinary Operations of the
 “ Holy Spirit at first given for wise and good
 “ Ends [those Ends being effected] have long
 “ since been withdrawn; yet the Pretension to
 “ them, still subsists in the confident and pre-
 “ sumptuous Claim of our Modern Methodists to
 “ to a particular and immediate Inspiration.”
 And then you proceed to Instance, “ First [say
 “ you] they assume the Grace of a miraculous
 “ Conversion, that whereas they were unre-
 “ generate, &c. and at such a particular Time,
 “ &c. the Divine Illumination shone upon
 “ them, the blessed Jesus knock’d at the Door
 “ of their Hearts, and the Holy Ghost de-
 “ scended upon their Souls, and this wonder-
 “ full Grace is generally effected, by some of
 “ their gifted Brethren, which is therefore
 “ quaintly call’d, Preaching the Word with
 “ Power, and then afterwards some of em”
 [not all as you say] “ from a persuasion of a
 “ real call, &c. go forth to publish the glad
 “ Tidings of the Gospel, with the Language
 “ of the Apostles, and the Zeal of Martyrs;
 “ preaching up the Name of Jesus, as if they
 “ were among our remotest Ancestors, under
 “ the Dominion of their Druids and Strangers
 “ to the Name of Christ.”

Now

Now Sir of what purpose is all this to prove, that the Methodists pretend to the extraordinary Miracles given to support the Church in its infancy, which are long since ceased? Here are no Pretensions, but to an inward spiritual Grace in the Heart, effected by the preaching of God's Word.---And that afterwards some of the Methodists, go forth to preach that Grace and Gospel which they have received. I really expected Sir by your manner of speaking, to have heard of some Instances of their pretending to the visible working of Miracles: Such as are long since withdrawn. But after you have taken a great deal of Pains to work up your Readers Minds, to expect some such Matter, *your Mountain in Labour, brings forth a Mouse*; and it only turns out after all, that the Methodists profess (what every true Christian ought to do) a Work of Grace upon their Souls; and this wrought by the means which God hath appointed, viz. the simple, and plain preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I think Sir, a Man must be a Novice indeed, that cannot see the glaring Sophistry, as well as the Impiety, of this part of your Sermon: Wherein you artfully endeavour, first, to blind unwary Readers with false and untrue Charges against the Methodists, which you never prove. --- And then you endeavour to bring some of the most sacred, and glorious Truths of the Gospel into Contempt, by your Ironical and ludicrous manner of speaking of them; even
of

of the Scripture expressions themselves: Such as the Revelations, 3, 20. where Christ says, *Behold I stand at the Door and knock: If any Man hear my Voice and open the Door I will come into him &c.* Surely Sir you was ignorant of this Text being in the Bible; or you could never have spoke so ludicrously of it as you do? And again, I blush for you Sir, when you very ironically call *the preaching of the Word with Power*, “a quaint expression of the Methodists;” tho’ a Phrase so often used by the holy Spirit, in the Scriptures: And which is very becoming the Mouth of any true Christian.

As to your accusing the Methodist Preachers of Haranging in their Sermons, as if they were among their old Ancestors, &c. and strangers to the Name of Christ: Indeed Sir, I must confess, I think there is great need of it: For it is not the Name of Christ that makes a Christian. And I think it is too plain that at this Day, many seem to have no more of Christianity than the Name; and I own I think there is as much reason to preach up Conversion to such, as there would have been to have done it among the antient Britons, under the Dominion of their Druids. As to the Methodists preaching with Apostolick Language, and the Zeal of Martyrs, I pray Sir it may be a Lesson to you, and many others, who seem to like very well to shun both the one, and the other, as being too primitive and antiquated, for this present

present polite and refined Age; in which, a much smother Path is found out in Religion, than the good old fashion'd Way, *of taking up the Cross daily, and following Christ, and confessing Him before Men, &c.* It is a sad Truth, that the Language of Plato, Aristotle, &c. in the Pulpit; and the lukewarmness of Laodiceans in Life, and Conversation; is what suits the Taste of this present Age, much more, than either the Language of the Apostles, or the Zeal of Martyrs: No wonder then, they should so much displease!

The next Thing Sir which I have to remark in your Sermon, is what I find in the 21st. Page; where speaking of the Spirit (you say) that "his Infusions are so gentle, so secret, so agreeable to the natural workings of our own Spirit, that we discern not between his suggestions and the Motions of our own rational Nature.

Indeed Sir, you might as well have spoke downright; and in plain English have told us, that the Holy Spirit in Man, is a meer non entity; an idle Figment sprung from the Brains, of the Enthusiastick Methodists. This would have been more honest, and much less prejudicial, than [under the Garb of an outward assent,] to deny such a Thing as the Spirits agency in Man: Which in fact you do: For if there is no Difference between the Spirits workings, and the natural Workings of my own Spirit, then

then they are one and the same Thing. Again if there is no discernment between His Suggestions; and the Motions of my own Nature; then it will consequently follow, that they are similar suggestions and Motions.

But Sir, give me leave to tell you that the Workings of the Spirit of God are exceedingly different and far above the Workings of Nature: For they are supernatural. I own Sir I cannot understand your Logick which makes Natural and Supernatural, synonymous Terms. The natural Motions of our own Spirit, and the supernatural workings of God's Spirit in the Soul, are as different, as *Life and Death, Light and Darkness*, or any two Contraries, whatever. The one is carnal; the other is spiritual. And to say, that carnal natural Motions and Suggestions, are so agreeable to spiritual Motions and Suggestions, as not to be distinguish'd from each other; is as absurd as to say, that *Love and Hatred, Joy and Sorrow*, are SENSATIONS, not to be distinguish'd in the Mind of Man.--- The Apostle Paul decides this Matter in few Words; for says he, *the natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, [why so?] because they are spiritually discerned.*--- A Man must first receive a regenerated spiritual Nature, before he can see *the Things of the Spirit*. For spiritual Faculties, are as necessary to behold spiritual Objects; as natural Faculties are to behold natural Objects. What Sir? do you think that *the fellow-*

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Ship

Ship of the Holy Spirit, in its *comforting, enlightening, strengthening, and sanctifying* Influences are not to be distinguished from the Workings of our own Spirit? If so; then excuse me Sir, If I tell you downright, that you are as yet a stranger to the *Washing of Regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost*; notwithstanding your having been outwardly baptized. But Sir, read your Collects and Prayers, Articles, Homilies, &c. and you will see how they contradict your low Ideas of God's Spirit. Pray Sir what do you mean, when you say to the People; "May the Peace of God which passeth all Understanding, keep your Hearts" and Minds in the Knowledge and Love of "God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord?" What Sir, can a Man have this *Peace* and *Knowledge*, and *Love*, and discern them not from his own natural Workings? No, say you. Why then Sir? do you call it a *Peace* that passeth ALL UNDERSTANDING? I suppose Sir your reason is, because it so written in the Prayer-Book: For it is evident by your own Words, that you neither experience, nor believe, any thing above meer Nature; and consequently not this supernatural *Peace of God which passeth all Understanding*. i. e. the understanding of a natural Man: But is indeed spiritually, and comfortably understood, by every new Born regenerated Soul.

After this Sir, you demand of the Methodists, a Sign of their Conversion by the Spirit? You

You say, " when these Men can shew us a
 " light from Heaven, &c. when we can hear
 " a Voice &c. then we will at least stand
 " speechless, &c. but till then, we must have
 " leave to think this their pretended Con-
 " version, &c. is a vain and unscriptural Pre-
 " sumption, &c.

In answer to this; I assert, that such visible
 miraculous Signs, are no necessary consequences
 of this Conversion. The Work of God's Spi-
 rit upon the Soul of Man, is not obvious to
 Flesh and Blood; or to the outward senses of
 the Body: For it is only spiritually discerned.
 There is many a Soul that daily experiences
 that *Kingdom of God, which is Righteousness, Joy
 and Peace in the Holy Ghost*; without any of
 these miraculous Signs, which you require.
 Christ says to his Disciples, *The Kingdom of
 Heaven is within you; and doth not come by out-
 ward Observation*. This Kingdom Sir, is not
 only out of the reach of Man's bodily Eyes,
 but is also out of the reach, of every unrege-
 nerate Man's highest Understanding; however
 learned, or wise he may be, according to this
 World: For *the Things of the Spirit are foolish-
 ness unto him*. Therefore Sir, your requiring
 these sort of proofs, is quite carnal and unscrip-
 tural. For tho' an extraordinary Miracle at-
 tended the Apostle Paul's Conversion; yet
 many of the Apostles, and followers of Christ,
 were converted, by the inward, powerful
 Working of *His Spirit* in their Hearts, without

any visible Miracles; of which, the Thief upon the Cross, is a remarkable Instance. For it plainly appears, that he at first (with the other Thief) reviled Christ; but soon after we find he was regenerated, and called Jesus, Lord. And yet no other visible Sign attended this instantaneous, sudden Conversion, than his confessing Christ to be the Lord; and calling upon Him [in the Faith of his Almighty Power] to deliver him. Here Sir is an Instance which you cannot deny. And that this Thief was really regenerated, and born again, is evident by what the Lord said to him; *verily I say unto thee, this Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*: Where he could not enter, except he was *born of Water and of the Spirit*.

But Sir before I conclude this Head; I would Endeavour to shew, that your Arguments invalidate your own Ministry. For when you was Ordain'd; and the Bishop laid his Hands on your Head and said, "*Receive the Holy Ghost*;" what Miraculous Sign was there Sir to prove, that you did receive it? None I dare say. And as I suppose Sir, no Minister in the Land any more than yourself, had any visible sign to prove the Reception of the Holy Ghost, when he was Ordain'd: Then according to your own Reasoning, [not mine,] neither you nor they, received *the Holy Ghost* in Ordination. And how far Sir, this reasoning of yours may be agreeable to the Bishops, and the Body of the Clergy, is what I leave to *Them*, to determine.

But

But Sir, tho' I dare not say any Ministers now in the Land, received the Holy Ghost when Ordain'd; yet I trust, that several of them have been born of the Spirit, *in the Day of God's Power*; and have received the Holy Ghost into their Souls; and do enjoy that Kingdom and Peace of God within them, which passeth all Understanding. And tho' they have no Miraculous outward Signs, to shew as a Testimony to these Things: Yet I am as well satisfied, as if they had. For regenerated Souls being *baptized by one Spirit into one Body*; have a Communion, and fellowship together, *in the Unity of the Faith*; and as fellow Members of Christ's mystical Body, *drink into the same Spirit*: By which, they are enabled to discern one another as Brethren; and so to love as Brethren. And **HERE**, tho' they may be of different Names and Denominations, &c. yee they know what it is, to be *all one in Christ*. And these Things (tho' so unintelligible to carnal Reason) are, what many Souls know, and Experience; but are oblig'd to conceal, because of a vain scoffing Generation, that rashly mock at every Thing, above the standard of their own dim spark of depraved Wisdom: Not considering, that *the Things of the Spirit, are only spiritually discerned*. But on this Head, I will proceed no further at present; because I fear, I am Writing to a Nicodemus, who will be ready to say; *How can these Things be?*

The

The next Thing I observe Sir is your hot Displeasure that some of the Methodists not content with the Pretensions of an extraordinary Conversion, but also presume to set up for *Teachers of the Word*. And here you seem quite in a Passion, and break out into such downright abusive Language, and virulent Expressions, as [in my Mind] are so far from becoming the Pulpit, that I think 'em unbecoming my Pen to transcribe. After you have vented yourself a little, you say, "Ask one of these illuminated Doctors for a Proof of his pretended Inspiration, he will tell you that he feels it within him, and has the witness in himself: But we know who has said *If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true, &c.*"

In answer to this Sir, I assert; that no Man ought to take upon himself to preach the Gospel, unless he be persuaded in his Mind, that the Spirit of God hath called him to the Work. And if a Man hath this Witness; it is not bearing Witness of himself, but the Spirit of God, within him. And tho' there is no doubt, but this Matter may be (and often is) abused by false Pretenders; yet nevertheless that dont make it a jot less real in *these*, who are the true Ministers of the Gospel; and who by Virtue of this spiritual Call, do feed the Flocks of Christ, with the sincere Milk of the Word; giving themselves up entirely to the Work, to labour constantly and diligently therein, being constrain'd

strain'd so to do, *not for the sake of filthy Lucre;* but purely from the Love of Christ, and a spiritual hungering after the welfare of Souls. Preaching that Gospel, which they inwardly feel, and experience, to be more precious than ten Thousand Worlds; and for the sake of which, they are willing to sacrifice all worldly Profit, Honour and Glory; *accounting all Things but loss, for the excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus, their Lord and God.* Who hath called them to *preach the unsearchable Riches of his Grace,* to lost Man. *Not with the enticing Words of Man's Wisdom, but with Demonstration of the Spirit and with Power,* that so the Peoples Faith might not stand in the Wisdom of Man but in the Power of God.

As to your requiring the Methodist Teachers to prove by Miracles, the Truth of their inward call to preach God's Word? What I have said on the last Head, will be equally an answer to this. But Sir, I am amaz'd that you should speak so sharply against a Matter, so absolutely own'd, and consented to, by the establish'd Church of England, and the whole Body of the Clergy, ever since the Reformation. Surely Sir, you have forgot, that [when you was first ordain'd] the Bishop ask'd you the following Question. "Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the HOLY GHOST, to take upon you this Office, and Ministration, &c." to which you answer'd. I TRUST SO. Now pray Sir, give me
Leave

Leave to ask? Did you really feel this inward moving of the Holy Ghost [when you told the Bishop so] or no? If you did, why do you condemn that, in another, which you profess in your self? But if you did not? Then Sir, I ask you very seriously, how you could satisfy your Conscience, in saying you did: When at the very same Time, you believed no such Thing, either in yourself, or in any other? And tho' you declared so solemnly, and expressly before God, and the Bishop [and perhaps many other Witnesses] that you was inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to enter into Holy Orders; yet now you make no scruple to take up your Pen against it, and make this inward moving of the Holy Ghost, the subject Matter of your scoff and ridicule. How Sir, you can reconcile these Mockings, and your own Declaration before God and the Bishop, &c. and make them consistent with a true reverence of God, and his Spirit; and a Conscientious Regard to Truth and Veracity; and the Character of a Minister of Jesus Christ; a Member and Son also of the Church of England Establishment; I say Sir, how can you reconcile these flat Contradictions, and make them agree together, is to me a Mystery so far beyond my Ability to comprehend; that I believe it would puzzle the most subtle Jesuit, in the whole Roman Conclave to find it out.

The next Thing Sir I shall animadvert upon is, where you in the 26, 27 p. of your Sermon, do

do exprelsly assert, that the Letter of the Scriptures, is sufficient to make *us wise unto Salvation*, without any further Inspiration of the Spirit of God.--- And that such Inspiration is not only unnecessary, “ but that the Preension to it, is a wicked Presumption with which, Satan hath fill’d the Hearts of the “ Methodists to lie of the Holy Ghost.”--Now Sir in all this [setting aside your passionate railing] how directly do you contradict, not only the Word of God; but also, the Prayers, and Collects, Articles, and Homilies, of your Church; as well as the Writings, of many of the English Bishops and Divines, eminent for their solid Faith and Piety. First the Scriptures abundantly testify of the necessity of being enlightened immediately by God’s Holy Spirit, in order to understand them properly. In the last Chap. of Luke. we read that Christ *opened the Understandings of the Disciples that they might understand the Scriptures, &c. &c.* Now Sir the Writings of the Old Testament were written by Inspiration, as well as *those* of the New. And if no further Inspiration was necessary, than that by which they were wrote.---Then why was it expedient, that Christ should open the Disciples Understandings, &c. It is evident tho’ they had the Prophets and Psalms, &c. yet that they understood them not, untill their understandings, were also inspired by a supernatural Light, infused into their own Hearts; whereby they were enabled to comprehend their

their true Meaning, and spiritual Signification.
 And therefore Sir I assert, that there is the same
 Necessity *now*, for an inward Inspiration in the
 Heart to understand savingly the Truths of the
 Gospel: And that the Letter of the Scriptures,
 without this inward Inspiration, is no more
 towards the true Understanding of them,
 then the Face of a Sun-Dial with its
 Figures, &c. is sufficient to discover the hour
 of the Day, without a natural Illumination.
 The inward Beauty, Life, Spirit, and quick-
 ning efficacy of the Scriptures; are never dis-
 cerned by any Soul, untill it is inwardly irra-
 diated, and enlightned, by the supernatural
Sun of Righteousness, who is *the Light of Life*.
 And then the inward Spirit, and outward Let-
 ter, harmonize and agree; just as the Light of
 the Sun, and the Figures, Gnomon, or Index
 of a Sun-Dial, in discovering the Hours of the
 Day. Supernatural Light, being as absolutely ne-
 cessary to *the One*, as natural Light to *the other*.
 And that this is agreeable not only to the Scrip-
 tures, but also to the establish'd Doctrine of the
 Church of England, is what I shall now endeavour
 largely to prove.---In the Litany, you pray
 Sir, " that it would please God to illuminate
 " all Bishops Priests, and Deacons, &c. with
 " true Knowledge and Understanding of HIS
 " WORD, &c. And again in the Collect for
 Whitsunday, you say. " God who as at this
 " time didst teach the Hearts of thy faithful
 " People, by sending them the Light of thy
 Holy

" Holy Spirit, grant us by the same Spirit, to
 have a right Judgment, &c.---Thus Sir, out
 of your own Mouth you are confuted conti-
 nually.---But let us proceed.---In the first Ho-
 mily for reading the Scriptures, Page 4, are
 these Words. " He not always most profiteth that
 " is most in turning of the Book; but he that
 " is most turn'd into it, that is most inspired
 " with the Holy Ghost &c." And again in p.
 286, 287, " The holy Ghost is the Schoolmaster
 " of Truth which leadeth his Scholars into all
 " Truth and whoso is not lead and taught by
 " this Schoolmaster, cannot but fall into deep
 " Errors, &c.---And again in p. 515, 516.
 the same thing is confirm'd in the strongest Man-
 ner.---Now let us come to the Bishops &c. and
 first Archbishop Usher, who says, " It is re-
 " quired that we have the Spirit of God, as
 " well to open our Eyes to see the light, as
 " to Seal up into our Hearts that Truth which
 " we see &c. for the same holy Spirit that in-
 " spired the Scriptures, inwardly assureth the
 " Hearts of God's Children above all reasons
 " and Arguments that these are the Scriptures
 " of God." *Sum of Christian Religion*, p.
 11, 12, Edit. 6. Bishop Stillingfleet speak-
 ing of Believers faith, " inwardly God hath pro-
 " mised to be a witness within them, that by
 " its Workings, it may confirm to them the
 " Records of Scripture, when they find the
 " Counterpart of them written in their Hearts
 " by the Finger of the Spirit of God. Origines

lagra

" sacra, book 2, c. 10. Sect. 5. Bishop Jewel
 saith, " Flesh and Blood is not able to under-
 " stand the holy will of God without special
 " Revelation. Therefore Christ gave thanks
 " unto his Father, for that He had revealed
 " his Secrets unto the little ones, Matth. xxi.
 " and likewise opened the Hearts of his Dis-
 " ciples, *that they might understand the Scrip-
 " tures*, Luke, 2, 4. Without this special Help
 " and prompting of God's holy Spirit, the
 " Word of God is unto the Reader, be he
 " never so wise or well learn'd as the Vision
 " of a sealed Book. *Reply to Hardings Answer*,
 " p. 534. Again, he says, " as the Scriptures
 " were written by the Spirit of God, so must
 " they be expounded by the same. For with-
 " out that Spirit we have neither Ears to hear,
 " nor Eyes to see &c." *Defence of the Apo-
 logy*, p. 72. Again; he saith in Page 532. " The
 " Spirit of God is bound, neither to the sharp-
 " of Wit, nor to the abundance of Learning.
 " Oftentimes, the unlearned seeth that Thing,
 " that the Learned cannot see, &c." Archbi-
 shop Sandy's saith (in a Sermon preach before
 Queen Eliz.) " that the outward Reading
 " of the Word without the inward Working of
 " the Spirit, is nothing." Thus Sir had I
 Time and Paper, I could go on to bring a Volume
 of Quotations from the Writings of the En-
 glish Clergy, to prove the necessity of super-
 natural Inspiration, to expound the Scriptures;
 and yet you call it a wicked Presumption. What
 would

would our venerable Protestant Reformers have thought, (many of whom nobly sealed the Truth of Christianity, with their Blood.) I say what would they have thought, to have seen their Collects, Prayers, Homilies, and Sermons, &c. all denied and aspers'd, by the Pen of a Minister of that establish'd Church, wherein they were Fathers? Surely Sir you must blush, when you come to reflect, how you have traduc'd their sound and evangelical Writings! Writings, so agreeable to Holy Writ, and the Purity of the Christian Religion. And whether I have not Reason so to speak, is what I leave to the impartial Judgment of every candid Reader to determine.

Another thing Sir, I must take notice of in your Sermon is, where you inveigh against the Methodists, for 'saying that their Heart is clean' and their Spirit right within them. Oh Sir, dont you know that true Faith purifies the Heart, and cleanses the Soul from Sin? Persons Sir of this Stamp, are not *pure in their own Eyes*: far from it! They mourn the corruption of their Nature, in true Poverty of Spirit; tho' at the same time (through Grace) they *rejoice in Christ Jesus*, and feel the Virtue of his atoning Blood, purifying their Hearts, as also the sanctifying Influences of the Spirit of God, renewing them in the inward Man, and conforming their Spirit to the Image of H. M., who is all their *Hope*, and all their *Salvation*.

I should have been very desirous Sir, to have enlarged on this and several other Particulars
in

in your Sermon; but least I should exceed the bounds of my Letter, (and the Patience of my Readers) I shall forbear several Things I otherwise should have mention'd. I had design'd before I finish'd, to have added a few Lines concerning the poor Methodists. [among whom there are many sincere good Christians as well Preachers as People.] And tho' I am very far from thinking that any of their Societies are without Tares amongst their Wheat, yet God forbid I should be so cowardly minded, as not to stand up for such as are truly sincere and godly amongst them, or any other Denomination, however despis'd amongst Men. I had design'd to have warn'd my Readers not to have confounded the vile and precious of any Body of People into one Lump, nor to be prejudiced against the Truth, because all are not what they seem to be. I had design'd to have enlarg'd a little on these, and some other Matters; but for the reasons beforemention'd must not do it now: Therefore I shall only add a Word or two; and so for the present conclude.

And now Sir, let me assure you and all my Readers, that in Writing this Letter, I have only aim'd at the Glory of God, and the Cause of Truth; and I pray you and every one to consider seriously of those Truths, which I have endeavour'd to illustrate; and despise them not tho' coming from so weak a Pen.

And if Mr. Potter is desirous to know who it is, that has so freely animadverted on his Sermon? I will tell you Sir. It is *One*, that has in
some

(31)

some Measure learn'd [through Divine Grace]
 that Jesus Christ is more precious than HEALTH,
 WEALTH, or FAME; *One*, who is no Bigot,
 but a Lover of all true Believers in every De-
 nomination; *One* Sir, who accounts himself a
Stranger and Pilgrim on Earth, looking beyond
 this earthly Vale of Tears to a better World,
 where he hopes [through his God and Saviour's
 Merits] to be crown'd with a Crown of Life,
 and eternal Glory; *One* Sir, that tho' he has
 [for Conscience sake] been very free with you,
 yet has done it, in Love and Christian faithful-
 ness; and whose Spirit now agrees with his
 Pen, in subscribing himself

Norwich,
 Feb. 4, 1758.

Mr. Potter's sincere Wellwisher
in both Worlds,

C. CAYLEY.

The Reader is desir'd to Correct the following Errata's with
 his Pen; and also to excuse the Inaccuracies of the Para-
 graphs being so crowded; and the Defects in pointing, &c.
 which were unavoidable, for want of more room, and more
 time to revise the Press.

Page, 8. l. 18. *for* the new Birth, *read*, any part of the
 New Birth. p. 13. l. 3d. *for* says you, *read* say you. p.
 24. *for* can you, *read*, you can.

Norwich, Feb. 4, 1758.

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